1:Lipkind E-5 (1937) 1948 SP9 Caraja SP9

Death.—At death, the soul becomes a wild ghost if the person has been violently killed and a regular resident of the village of the dead if he has suffered a quiet death. A shaman's soul is translated to the skies. Mourning puts an end to all religious ceremonies and is celebrated by self-laceration, the destruction of property, and daily keening. There is separate burial in formal cemeteries for those who died quietly and those who died violently. The corpse is wrapped in a mat with his weapons and ornaments, and the mat is hung in a shallow grave covered by poles (fig. 22). Food and drink are provided for a short period. After the next change of season, the bones are exhumed and placed in a family urn.

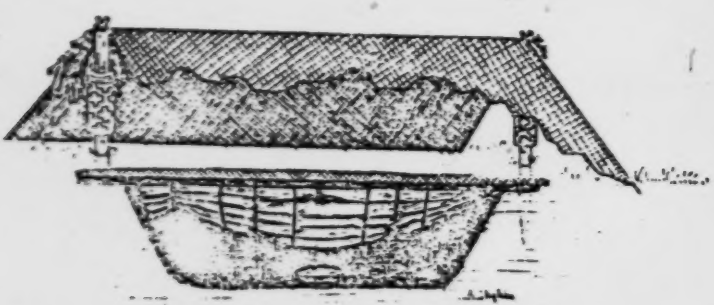

FIGURE 22.—*Carajá* burial. (Redrawn from Ehrenreich, 1891 b, fig. 16)

WARFARE

The *Carajá* are good fighters and have maintained themselves since prehistoric times in a territory surrounded on all sides by warlike enemies. Their usual tactics are waiting outside an enemy village at night and attacking at dawn. In defense, they run to the nearest water, where they are unbeatable. They use the bow and arrow and club, and are skilled wrestlers. They cut off a foot bone of a dead enemy and carry it back to their village; this places them in control of the ghost, who now becomes a caretaker of the village and is impersonated in a special dry-season ceremony. At one such ceremony there were two *Tapirapé* ghosts, three *Chavante*, one *Cayapó*, and one Neo-Brazilian. Present-day warfare is largely with the *Chavante*, the *Cayapó*, and the *Canoeiro*. Now and then a Neo-Brazilian may be killed by stealth to avenge a personal grievance. No captives are taken except women and small children, who are treated as full members of the group.

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Art.—Decorative art is confined to woven designs on baskets and mats, feather ornaments, elaborate masks with superimposed feather designs,

/31 cont./

764 The external equipment of the grave is evidently supposed to represent a house. Two poles (itäδ) 1 1/3 meters
[776] high and decorated on the short, forked tip with bundles of feathers hanging down, are planted at the head and foot ends of the grave in order to keep away the "animals," that is, in any case the demons (the kenaima of Guiana). The drum-like thickness in the middle part of the pole bears the family mark of the deceased, engraved or indicated by feather

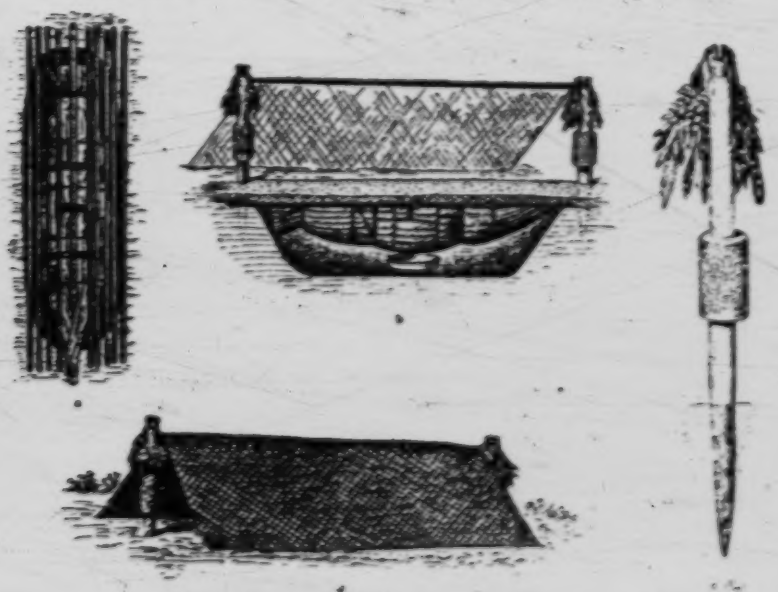

Fig. 16. Grave equipment.

[532] mosaic. One of the specimens available (c) shows the cross-decoration of the lizard (hädauã). The feather pattern of both the others is unfortunately unrecognizable.

Both poles are connected with a cord, over which two
[775] buriti mats are spread like a roof (d). /32/ Under this tent is put a gourd with food and drink for the soul, which after the burial stays for a while in the vicinity of the grave.

/34/

775 The souls of the dead, which, as mentioned above, are thought of as remaining for a while in the vicinity of the grave, later like to return to their former home. They appear to their relatives especially on stormy nights. When the rain streams [787] down and lightning brightens the darkness, the old people remember their dead relatives and attempt by loud lamentations and singing to put themselves in a state of artificial ecstasy, which finally conjures up in their aroused imaginations any desired phantom.

771 The animistic "religion," if one wishes to call it this, still lacks any ethical basis. It has not elevated itself to the acceptance of a higher, omnipotent spirit upon which man feels dependent in the expectation of punishment and reward for his actions. Thus there is also lacking anything which would indicate the external relationships of man to the godhead, idols, cult performances, prayers, etc. There are among them, however, those ceremonies from which apparently the higher cult forms have come everywhere in the world, the mysterious

535 121 Masked dances. The important role which such masked dances play among the North American tribes is known everywhere. Until now remarkably little was known about the analogous customs on the southern continent. Only the dances of the Tekuna, Juri, and Uaupé tribes are mentioned in passing in the literature. The "temples" and "idols" which the oldest missionary reports mention are obviously nothing other than the "medicine huts" or "flute houses" with the fantastic mask costumes stored in them.

Only recently has the wealth of mask material brought back by the two Xingu expeditions again directed attention to these festive dances which are so important for an understanding of Indian life. Observations made later among the Karaya supplied a desirable supplement to this.

Their masked dances are of quite special interest ethnologically on account of the remarkable analogies which they exhibit in the form of the masks, as well as in other festive customs, with those of Melanesia. This correspondence goes into such

/332 cont./
535 Araguaia (Central Brazil)/" (2).
796
[113]

2. Jahrbuch des städtischen Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig, Vol. 3, Leipzig, 1910, pp. 97-122.

346 I should like only to make a few remarks here about the
532 mask huts. Castelnau mentions and illustrates (Vue et scènes, Paris, 1853, Plate 8 and text page 7) in the first Sambioá village an almost semicircular, vertical palm-leaf wall, the convex side of which is turned toward the village. In the open space stand about ten dance masks. Beside this there is a framework of poles which consists of several oblique poles stuck in a circle, from the center of which projects a long pole bearing a bunch of leaves at the end. These two structures are shown somewhat larger on page 9. In front of the palm-leaf wall are two dancers who have placed the masks on their heads. The way they are portrayed (the absence of the leaf-aprons and the way they are leaping about) proves that Castelnau was not present at the dances. Ehrenreich also reports on such semicircular compartments for masks, and, to be sure, also among the Karajá ("Beiträge," p. 34). I never saw such compartments, but only the house-like mask huts described by me.

775 About the world beyond, the Karajá were unable to give me any information. Allegedly the deceased go to the heavens.

787 Dreams, which are said to be very frequent, are regarded as reality. For example: "If someone dreams that a relative of his has died, he gets into his boat and rides there, in order to see whether it is true." (Kurisĭ.)

789 Magic (lŏbūnĭ) of all kinds is very widespread; even enlightened Karajá still firmly believe in its effect. It is believed that through /333/ manipulations natural events (rain) can be influenced or that other people can be harmed through magic.

Rain magic is very common; everyone can use it, everyone has the apparatus necessary for it. I obtained several of these:

6:Cook M-3,4 (ca. 1900) 1909
SP9 Caraja SP9

rests on top of the ground. Beneath the corpse, which swings eight or ten inches above the bottom of the grave, is placed a clay pan filled with food for the shade of the departed. Next, a number of poles are placed beside the first one supporting the body so that they cover completely the mouth of the grave; and over these, in turn, is placed a palm-leaf mat, upon which is heaped about ten inches of earth. The grave is further marked and decorated by setting up at the head and foot two stakes some three feet high, each terminating in a fork at the upper end, and embellished with a tassel of feathers, besides other adornments. These decorations are for the purpose of frightening away trespassing demons or ghosts. At the center of each post is a ring on which is carved the insignia or emblem of the family of the deceased, which, for example, may be a lizard. A strong cord is stretched between the stakes resting in the forked tops, over which, with the outer edges touching the ground, are placed two palm-leaf mats to form a miniature hut over the grave. This is intended as the domicile of the deceased. Calabash shell vessels containing food and drink for the soul, are placed upon the grave inside this mortuary hut, for the disconsolate shade is believed to linger near its discarded body for a time. Later, if the surviving relatives demand it, the bones are exhumed and deposited in a large clay urn, which is either sunk into the ground near the grave, or allowed to stand upon the surface of the ground.

The memory of the departed is cherished. Even long after the death of an individual, the surviving relatives give expression to their grief by loud and stormy outbreaks of feeling when any occurrence revives the memory of him. The occasion may be the arrival at the village of some one who was a near relative or an intimate friend of the departed, whose appearance recalls the memory of him; or it may be the revealing of some memento of the deceased. Dr. Ehrenreich says that when he was looking through the baskets in one of the huts for curios, he brought to light some memorials of deceased parents or children. Instantly, the women in the hut—

6:Cook M-3,4 (ca. 1900) 1909
SP9 Caraja SP9

at will into a trance or semi-death, in which state their souls, or doubles, explore the occult, or what is hidden from men in a normal state. They also believe that these conjurers can transform themselves at pleasure into animals—into the form of a witch-wolf, for example, in order to terrify, injure and domineer over men; and, in brief, can do all things whereby shamanism—primitive priestcraft—secures and maintains its influence over the tribe. They have no images or idols, nor even fetiches, for the reason that they have not yet advanced to this more complex belief, if advancement it may be called.

The ghosts or spirits of the dead, which, as previously stated, are believed to tarry for a time in the vicinity of the graves where hang the bodies they were forced to abandon because they had fallen so into disrepair, take delight, in after time, in returning to haunt the places of their habitation during the days of their flesh; moreover, it is believed that they appear to their relatives, especially on wild and stormy nights: When the darkness is inky black, illumined only by the ceaseless play of the terrifying lightnings, and the thunders crash and boom as if the unseen Powers were engaged in mighty conflict, while the winds moan and shriek in the forest, then the old folk think of their dear departed; and by loud lamentations and wailings, put themselves into a state of ecstacy whereby their inflamed imagination creates every wished-for phantasm.

This animistic religion is without any ethical foundation. It has not in this stage attained to a conception of a higher or ruling Spirit upon whom man feels himself dependent for rewards and punishments for his deeds; and as just stated, lacks everything which connects man externally with divinity, such as images, the paraphernalia of worship, ritual, and the like. But we find among the Karayá those ceremonials from which apparently everywhere throughout the world the higher and more elaborate forms of worship have come, that is, the mystery rites.

Mask dances occupy an important place in Karayá life. The prominent rôle which these masquerades play among

7:Lipkind E-5 (1938-1939) 1940
SP9 Caraja SP9

among the last. He got stuck in the hole. His belly was too big. He decided to go back. It was a dead leaf that he spied. He spoke to his wife, 'Let's go back. There is death there.' They went back again. Those that had come out were very happy. They were all happy. Then one of them climbed a tree. It was a child that climbed. He fell and died. They all mourned. Suddenly they got cheerful again. For this reason they were angry, his mother and father. His brother and sister, married to each other, were angry. For this reason there was keening. They say that there in the depths of the water there was no death."

In addition to being the original home of the Carajá, the underworld is also the home of the dead. Those who die a quiet death and are properly buried live there much in the same fashion as they lived on earth. But they are always a bit crazed and dangerous to the living. They must be placated by offerings and ceremonial observances. Otherwise they assume the form of poisonous snakes and bite those who neglect them. Those who die a violent death, who are clubbed or torn by beasts, become violent unappeasable ghosts. They are buried in the woods without arms or fire, in a position contrary to the traditional position in order to disorient them. A woman's girdle is tied about their eyes to blind them. Their desire is to kill, and especially to kill their closest kin. Their afterlife is extremely unpleasant. They wander about in a perpetual rage and feed on little birds which they eat raw.

The other dimension of the Carajá universe is the sky. Only the southeastern quadrant of the sky interests the Carajá. The rest is uninhabited forest. Starting at the Southern Cross virtually every star and constellation visible in the east is a named supernatural. The Milky Way is the shaman's road. When the shaman falls into his trance he goes up the shaman's road into one of the villages of the sky supernaturals. There he receives his power and knowledge and, if he has not eaten or drunk, thereafter is a curer. If he has, he becomes a sorcerer and killer. The good shaman after his death goes to live in the sky. He squats up there in the heat of the sun with his inexhaustible pot of food and gourd of water in front of him and his shamanistic rattle in his hand, held up to shade his eyes from the glare of the sun. At night he dances with the supernaturals. This is considered the happiest afterlife.

The earth and underworld are also inhabited by supernaturals. Every pool, every deep spot in the river, every bit of forest or savannah, has its supernatural owners. These are of two kinds. Many are amiable and beautiful beings who have friendly relations with humans. They are invited to feasts and impersonated in the masked dances. The others are ugly and dangerous monsters who cannot be placated. Their woods are avoided and nobody fishes in their pools.

The sorcerer has a wide variety of techniques at his disposal. He may

7:Lipkind E-5 (1938-1939) 1940
SP9 Caraja SP9

754 request a ghost to do his killing. In this case the ghost takes the form of a wild beast, usually a leopard. He may request a supernatural either to enter the body of his victim, or to turn loose on the victim his subject animals,
756 particularly the alligator and piranha. The curing shaman sucks out the intrusive supernatural or persuades the ghosts or supernaturals to withhold their attack.

776 The dichotomy of ghosts and supernaturals is quite clear in Carajá re-
766 ligion. Ghosts are placated by calendrical feasts, run by a hereditary priest.
746 Supernaturals are invited to the masked dances by a shaman who takes
[756] complete charge of this cult. There is little relationship between the two cults. There is a momentary appearance of masks during the Big-house Feast of the ghost cult, and an occasional offering to ancestors during the mask cult ceremonies.

775 What is of special interest is that there are many maleficent supernaturals
776 who cannot be approached at all. There is no technique for handling them except keeping out of their way. The violent ghosts really fall in the same category as far as their relation to humans is concerned. And yet they are
[754] chiefly the best men of the Carajá who have fallen in battle against their enemies. In this curious bit of fantasy there seems to be a projection of the fear and aggression which are overtly present in the social life.

771 In recent years a few Carajá have been able to visit Rio and Belém. They
772 have brought back a somewhat different picture of the extent of the world,
597 a picture with which many Carajá are now familiar. It never intrudes into Carajá life. It is reserved solely for discourse with outsiders. No contradiction is felt because the two conceptions are never brought into the same universe of discourse. I was not able to detect any signs of skepticism. The Carajá is perfectly sure that he has a clear view of the true character of the world. The peculiar beliefs of outsiders are in keeping with their quaint behavior and lack of good breeding. A Carajá will not dispute about such things. He listens to the opinions of others with courtesy and curiosity but cannot be induced to take them seriously. It is much easier to pretend to
[747] agree. If you are a missionary, you will give him presents. Later he may have the additional pleasure of expounding your fantastic ideas to his fellows.

182 Two factors seem to me to contribute largely to the maintainance of this
772 attitude. In the first place, the old way of life is still intact. When a man is
773 able to find full occupation and joy in his activities, it is difficult to get him to doubt the premises on which they are founded. Secondly, every important feature of life is validated by mythical tales which are the Carajá history. The emergence myth, given above in its simplest and shortest variant, is one of many. I can do no more than mention some of the most important here. The full form of the emergence myth gives the names of all the ancestors who emerged and the precise social divisions which they

7:Lipkind E-5 (1938-1939) 1940
SP9 Caraja SP9

CARAJÁ COSMOGRAPHY

By WILLIAM LIPKIND

The Carajá are an isolated people inhabiting a large territory slightly north of the geographical center of Brazil. During 1938 and 1939 I lived with the Carajá and collected a large body of textual material which forms the basis of the generalized presentation of Carajá world-view which follows.[1]

The Carajá universe is very small. Their own territory (Bananal), an island formed by a large fork of the Araguaya river is its center. To the west the great Chavante plateau stretches out to the huge river in which the sun goes down. All night the sun moves through the underworld and in the morning he comes up out of another river which is the eastern boundary of the world. If you paddle many days downriver, you will come to a village of the transformer Kanashiwe, the world's northern limit. An equal journey upstream will take you to its southern limit, another village of Kanashiwe.

The Carajá are perfectly acquainted with the middle portion of this parallelogram. Every beach, high bank, wood and lake along the Araguaya, every body of water and distinctive patch of ground within Bananal, is known and has a name. The tributaries are known in less detail and only up to a few days' journey from their mouths. Inland from the rivers their knowledge peters out after a short distance and you are soon in mythical country.

To the Carajá this world seems very large. The journey to its northern and southern limits is the initiation journey of the dead. No man since legendary times has gone very far toward the eastern and western boundaries, and, besides, there are two other dimensions, the underworld and the sky.

In the underworld, the original home of the Carajá, there was neither sickness nor death. As the emergence myth states, "More people kept being born. Nobody died. There wasn't room enough. When a man got old, he sat there in one place without moving. Kaboi couldn't add any more houses to the village. It was full. A new father was lying on the mat. It was time to eat honey. He went off hunting honey. While he was hunting he heard a *seriema* (Portuguese name of a bird) sing. He scooped a hole toward it and came out. He found fruit at once and decided to return. When he got back he gave his folk the fruit to taste. They found it very good and wanted to come out. They invited the others to come with them. Wobedu sent his folk out first and he went first among them. Kaboi came

[1] The work was financed by Columbia University.